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SELECT MONUMENTS OF HYDERABAD

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HISTORICAL SKETCH

THE antiquity of Hyderabad may be traced from the Proto-historic period. The undulating plains, the rocky knolls and the ever flowing river Musi and its tributaries made it congenial for human habitation for thousands of years. Several Neolithic implements, generally dated from 2nd millenium B. C. to 1st millenium B. C. were noticed near Tolukatta but no regular excavation was conducted here. However, the present city and its environs was a favourite haunt of the Megalithic folk who succeeded the Neolhitic during the first millennium before Christ. Several cairn circles have been identified near Boinpalli, Fathenagar, Gurramguda, Lingampalli, Kukatpalli, Hashmatpet and Mowla Ali.

Recently two inscriptions in archaic Telugu script datable to 4th cen. A. D., have been discovered near Chaitanyapuri, situated beyond Malakpet. One inscription records about the existence of one Govinda Raja vihara on the banks of the river Pampa. These inscriptions are noticed at the top of a huge standing granite rock at a height of nearly 6 meters situated adjacent to the river Musi. It is likely that the rock must have been buried under earth, at least upto half of its present height and because of its situation by the side of the

swift flowing ancient river, about 3 to 5 meters thick deposit of earth must have been washed down the river. This Govinda Raja might have been the founder member of the Vishnukundin dynasty.

In one of the copper plate inscriptions found at Tummallagudem situated on the banks of Musi in Ramannapet taluk of Nalgonda District it is recorded that Parambhattarika Mahadevi, the wife of Govindavarma of the Vishnukundin dynasty, had established a Vihara near Indrapala Nagara. The ancient name of Tummallagudem as popularly believed, must have been Indrapala Nagara.

In the Hatigumpha inscription of the Chedi king Kharavela, we find that a Satavahana king was defeated and chased away to his capital city Musika Nagara. However some palaeographists have read the word as Asikanagara. If it was Musikanagara it might have been situated on the bank of the river Musi, which is a tributary of Krishna. Only the spade of some Archaeologist in the future may bring out the remains of Musikanagara.

On the outskirts of Hyderabad a Jaina inscription datable to 11th cent. A.D., has been noticed near Boinpalli. The inscription is situated adjacent to Nizamabad road.

Hyderabad was a metropolitan town of the Telangana region even from the Kakatiyan period and many historians believed that the Golconda fort was originally built up by the Kakatiyas of Warangal and later passed on to the Bahmanis.

Qutub Shahis

The first king of Golconda, Sultan Quli Qutub Shah, also known as Bare Malik or Senior Nobleman, was the founder of the dynasty, hailed from an ancient family of Qara Turks of the sect of Ali of Saidabad, near Hamadan in Persia. It is said that he was a grandson of Mir Jahan Shah of Persia. As a youth he had to leave his country for safety and arrived in Deccan about the middle of the 15th century and joined as a body guard of the Bahmani king at Gulbarga. Later he was appointed Accountant-General of the Imperial harem and the faithful duties carried him forward into prominence.

In 1518 Sultan Quli (Plate 1) declared his independence from the Bahmani yoke assuming the title of Qutub Shah. Sultan Quli replaced the mud fort at Golconda by a substantial fortress of stone. Thevenot who visited Golconda in 1666 A.D. tells an interesting story



PLATE 1 : Sultan Quli Qutb Shah — 1st King.



PLATE 2 : Jamsheed Qutb Shah — 2nd King.



PLATE 3 : Ibrahim Quli Qutb Shah — 4th King.



PLATE 4 : Sultan Mohamad Quli Qutb Shah — 5th King.
(Founder of Hyderabad)

about the origin of the name Golconda. The place where the fort now stands was shown to the king by a shepherd who guided him through a wood. Sultan Quli reigned till 1543 A. D.

The second king Jamsheed Qutub Shah (Plate 2) ascended the throne of Golconda in 1543 A. D. probably after killing his father, at least he might have had a hand in the murder of the aged king. His brother Ibrahim who was till then the Governor of Telangana forts fled to Bidar and later to Vijayanagara where that great King Ramaraja was ruling. Jamsheed was a war like ruler and took part in various feuds between the kings of Bidar and Bijapur. He was also a poet of some recognition. During the later part of his life he suffered due to cancer and gradually indulged in the pleasures of table and sank into gross debauchery. He was a man of wild passions and his reign at its close was a reign of terror. He died in 1550 A. D., after a reign of only 7 years.

The third king Subhan Quli was a young boy of 7 years when elevated to the throne after his father, Jamsheed's death. After six months he passed out of our knowledge completely.

The fourth king Ibrahim Quli Qutub Shah (plate 3) was a fugitive at Vijayanagara at the time of his accession. After his succession he had to wage many battles to consolidate himself at Golconda. He joined the alliance of the other Deccan Sultans to fight against Vijayanagara at the great battle of Rakshas Tangadi, on 24th of December, 1564 A. D. which saw the downfall of the great Hindu empire.

Ibrahim also strengthened the fortfications at Golconda round the hills with stone and mortar. Besides several mosques and schools, Ibrahim built the huge tank at Ibrahimpatnan, a Langar House at Golconda and a flower garden at the site of the tombs. Even the Hussainsagar tank was built during his regime in 1575 A. D. He died in 1580.

The fifth king Mohamad Quli Qutub Shah, (Plate 4) ascended the throne after the death of his father in 1580. During his peaceful and prosperous reign Golconda reached its zenith. Mohamad Quli, early in his reign, became infatuated with a beautiful Hindu girl, named Bhagamathi. In 1591 he built the magnificent city of Hyderabad, a few miles away from Golconda and named it as Bhagyanagar, after his beloved mistress. Later he was persuaded by the orthodox sections of his nobles to change the name of the city to Hyderabad after Hyder,



PLATE 5 : Mohamad Qutub Shah — 6th King.



PLATE 6 : Abdullah Qutb Shah — 7th King.

one of the titles of Ali to whose sect he belonged. But even many years later the name Bhagyanagar remained in currency. Tavernier and Thevenot speak of it as only Bhagyanagar.

The new city was laid out on the grid-iron principle with two important crossings over the main road. At the junction of these roads the famous Charminar was built in the year 1593. The king built many edifices such as the Gulzar House, Ashur Khana, Jami Masjid, Dad Mahal, Chandan Mahal, Lakan Mahal etc. Mohamad Quli was not only a just and a capable king but also a poet of repute.

Mohamad Quli was succeeded by Mohamad Qutub Shah, (Plate 5) his son-in-law who reigned for 14 years. He was a historian and a philosopher and most of his time was spent in study and intercourse with the learned. The Qutub Shahi chronicles were compiled in his reign. The main undertaking during his reign was laying of the foundation of the Mecca Masjid in the midst of the city of Hyderabad.

After the death of Mohamad Qutub Shah his son Abdullah (Plate 6) ascended the throne in 1614. In 1642 A.D. Tavernier visited Golconda and saw a diamond with a merchant at Golconda which was priced at Rs. 5 lakhs. Thevenot who visited Golconda in 1666 asserts that the mother of the king Abdullah, Hayat Bakshi Begum was a Brahmin lady. She played a notable role in the affairs of the State during the reign of her son. She brought many Hindus to power at the fort of Golconda and their influence became predominet in the next reign.

The last king was Abul Hasan Tana Shah, (Plate 7) who was the son-in-law of Abdullah. He employed Akkanna and Madanna, two Brahmin brothers, as the Prime Minister and Assistant Minister. It was said that Abul Hasan indulged in pleasures which went to the notice of Aurangzeb, the puritan Moghul emperor of Delhi, who invaded Golconda in the year 1683 for the first time and later in January, 1687 to punish "this wicked man" whose evil deeds "pass beyonds of writings". The main allegation was that the authority of the Government was kept in the hands of the infidels particularly the Brahmin brothers. The siege of Golconda took nearly eight months and finally capitulated in September, 1687 by the treachery of Abdullah Khan Pani who was bribed. The dethroned king was taken to Daulatabad and lived as captive untill his death in 1704.



PLATE 7 : Abul Hasan Tana Shah — 8th King.

Brief History of Asaf Jahi Dynasty

The history of Asaf Jahs begins with the grand-father of the first Nizam, Chin Qulich Khan, who was mortally wounded on the glacis of Golconda during the last Mogul attack on the fort in 1687. At the final siege of Golconda in 1687 Ghazi-ud-din Firoz Jung, the father of the first Nizam, was Commander-in-chief of Mogul Army until he was wounded. His son Asaf Jah or Nizam-ul-Mulk was Viceroy of the Deccan under Aurangzeb, and later he was appointed Governor of Malwa. He raised troops, marched on the Deccan and fought his way to independence in 1712. Golconda and Hyderabad submitted to him after the battle of Shakar Khera in Berar in which Mubariz Khan, the Subedar of Hyderabad, was killed in 1724. He died in 1748 and his son Nasir Jung ruled from 1748 to 1750. He was killed by one of his own followers before he could achieve his object. The next Nizam was Muzaffar Jung, the grandson of the previous Nizam, who succeeded in 1750. In the following year he was murdered and through the persuations of Bussy, his son Salabat Jung was put on the throne. In 1762 Salabat Jung was dethroned by his brother Nizam Ali Khan, and was confined at Bidar, where he died in 1763.

In 1763 Nizam Ali Khan came to the throne and reigned until 1803. He was succeeded by his son Sikandar Jah who died in 1829 and was succeeded by his son Nasir-ud-dowla. He died in 1857 just at the commencement of the Indian Mutiny. On his death-bed he counselled his son Afzul-ud-dowla to be friendly to the British as they had been friendly to the Nizam. Afzal-ud-dowla and his famous minister Salar Jung–I, skilfully steered their ship through troubled waters. His Highness became known as "Our Faithful Ally".

In 1869 Afzal ud-Dowla died and was followed by his son Mir Mahboob Ali Khan. There was a council of Regency until 1884. After his death in 1911 his son Mir Osman Ali Khan Bahadur succeded to the throne in 1911

SELECT QUTUB SHAHI MONUMENTS

Golconda Fort

The famous Golconda Fort (plate 8) situated about 9 kms. west of Hyderabad was once famous as a diamond market. The Italian traveller Marcopolo has observed : "The flower of the diamonds and other large gems as well as the largest pearls are all carried to the great koos and other kings and princes of these region. In truth, they possessed all the treasures of the world". The fort stands over a hillock in the midst of rocky plains and rugged expanse. As some historians viewed, perhaps, it is the largest castle ruin in the world.

The name Golconda must have been formed of two Telugu words. "Golla and Konda" which means when read together, the hill of Golla-shepherd community which is even now the largest section of population living inside the fort. A small fortress was probably raised on the hillock during the Kakatiyan period for stationing a feudal chief. Later the Qutub Shahis made it the seat of their power by expanding the enclosures and raising it to the status of one of the important Deccani forts.

The name of Golconda became popular during the reign of the first king of the Qutub Shahi line, Sultan Quli. The fort came under his possession with all its dependencies of the Bahmani kings of Gulbarga in the year 1364 which they held until 1512, when it passed on to kings of the Qutub Shahi line. Prior to 1364 A. D. there does not appear to be any recorded history but there are evidences in the citadel which show that it is as old as the fort of Warangal.

The Qutub Shahi dynasty formed out of the five fragments of the Bahmani kingdom, was founded in the year 1518 by Sultan Quli who added many buildings to Golconda and strengthened its fortification.

Ibrahim Qutub Shah the fourth king of Golconda also strengthened the fortification and extended the area within the fortified walls by building a magnificent wall of more than 7000 running meters. The construction of the wall was completed in 1559-60 with the erection of Mecca Darwaza on its south-western section which actualy faces Mecca. There are 87 bastions along the wall some of which are octagonal in shape topped by battlemented parapets. There are eight main gates with bastions in front, which rise to a height of 15 to 18 meters above the ground level. Outside the fortification there

PLATE 8 (a) & (b) : Golconda Fort.

is a wide moat which was once filled with water. There are three lines of powerful curtain walls one within the other in succession. The first fortification encloses the town, the second which is a double wall runs around the foot of the hill over which the citadel stands about 300 metres above the town and the third one within the second is formed by connecting the walls of masonry with the natural boulders which project around the hill. The outer rampart enclosing the city is about 5 Kilometers in circumference and provided with 87 bastions over which were mounted large cannons. The great wall is pierced by eight gates each with a distinct name such as Fateh Darwaza, Mecca Darwaza, Petlaburj Darwaza, Banjara Darwaza etc.

The Mecca gate opening towards west is composed of an outer and inner gate set at right angles to each other with a large open court in between. The outer gateway is defended by a barbican with an entry at the side. Like the main gate i.e. Fateh Darwaza, this is also defended by loop holed crenellations and machicolations at the parapet level. The doors are fitted with plates and studded with iron spikes.

The citadel known as Balahisar is approached by a wide road with dwelling houses and shops on either side. The hill on which the citadel stands is surrounded at the foot by a formidable wall and its only entrance is popularly known as Balahisar gate which is one of the largest in the fort. Over the entrance and on the sides of the gate are figures of griffins and lions carved in stone, which is an evidence of Hindu origin of the fort. The gate-way is shielded by a powerful semi-circular fortification provided with a platform inside to a height of the battlement to be used by guards for viewing those who enter the fort.

On entering the citadel to the left is a three storeyed building known as Sila Khana which was once used as an armoury. Even today one can see inside the armoury, the muskets with wooden handles, cannons, cannon-balls, carriages which carried the armoury to the battle front. To the right are found the ruins of the quarters used probably as administrative offices during the Qutub Shahi times. These are low buildings which continue to some distance up the hill.

Passing up the ascent by the stone paved steps, there is a large well which supplied water to the fort by a net-work of conduit pipes. Water was probably drawn by rotating Persian wheel. The other source of water to the fort was the Durgam tank which is about 3 kms. north of the fort. Still the conduit pipes may be seen fixed permanently over and across the walls of the palaces. The water supply system in Golconda fort is a proof of hydrological engineering skill.

A little higher up, the ruins of the famous Ambar Khana or the kings's store house are found, in front of which is a Persian inscription which records that during the regime of Sultan Abdullah Qutub Shah the store house was completed by the endeavours of Khairat Khan, the Governor of the citadel in October, 1642 A. D. A little below towards left of Ambar Khana is an oblong and poorly ventilated cell which is said to have been the place where the Saint Ramadas, a great Telugu poet and the chief patron of the Bhadrachalam temple was imprisoned by Abul Hasan Tana Shah.

Behind Ambar Khana is the oldest part of the whole fort. A small mosque which is said to have been raised by Ibrahim Qutub Shah is seen on the left. On the right in close proximity, is a Hindu cave temple which is said to have been constructed by Madanna, the Prime Minister of Abul Hasan. From the temple a small gate-way leads to the court-yard of the royal palace of the kings. The Diwan-e-Khas or the hall of justice is in the ground floor of the building. Narrow stair cases at either end of the hall lead to a flat roof on which is a stone Takht or Masnad (throne) ascended by ten steps. From this point of vantage one gets a most picturesque view of the surrounding region. This is the place where the kings and their entourage enjoyed the bracing breeze and where Abul Hasan Tana Shah the last and unfortunate king of Golconda watched with mingled apprehension the fruitless efforts of his army against the unrelenting and pitiless Mughal Emperor, Aurangzeb.

While getting down the other end of the royal palace, we see the ruins of the kings palaces, spacious court-yards, thick walls and lofty arches which testify to the splendour of Golconda in its days of glory. The steps lead down to the entrance of the king's harem, once guarded by armed eunuchs. The Queens enjoyed the evenings in the open court-yard studed with beautiful fountains and cisterns. Then we pass through a net-work of compartments to another palace supposed to have been used as Diwan-e-Am. The various palaces have been raised in different periods as per the needs of the times. There is a platform at one end of Diwan-e-Am from where the kings cosulted their noblemen on important occasions which has now been stripped off all its adornments.

In one corner of the palace there is a large circular opening which is believed to be the entrance of a sub-terranean passage at one time extending to Gosha Mahal, 8 to 10 kms. away.

QUTUB SHAHI TOMBS

The magnificent monuments which stood the test of time and vagaries of nature, are the tombs erected to the memory of the departed kings of Golconda. They are situated at a kilometer north of Golconda fort to be approached through the Banjara Darwaza. The grandeur of their appearance as the mute and solemn reminders of the glorious days of Golconda and the great historical personalities whose mortal remains were interred therein, their architectural excellence must appeal even to the most unimpressionable visitor. The tombs which from a large, close group stand upon a raised plateau, are also approached from Saifabad or Mallepally.

The tombs and other buildings of the Qutub Shahi kings mark the evolution of a new architectural style distinct from that of Bahmani at Gulbarga and Bidar and the Adil Shahi at Bijiapur. The Qutub Shahi style is a mixture of Persian, Pathan and Hindu forms. Shah Rocco detects, in these monuments a lack of homogeneous development and want of proportion. He feels that the tombs are too large for the stylobates and the minarets are stunted. In fact, perfect harmony from the plinth to the top is the chief characteristic of the Qutub Shahi tombs. They stand over a wide quadrangular terrace approached on all sides by flights of steps. The arcades on all the sides and the pointed arches give a very pleasing appearance of the whole building. The main body of the buildisg which is also quadrangular rises to about 9 to 15 meters above the terrace over the arcade and are surmounted by balustrades with beautiful minarets at the corners.

The principal material used in the construction of the tombs is grey granite, emblished with stucco decoration wherever necessary. Originally each tomb had a mosque as an adjunct, which gives it the sanctity of a sactuary. When Aurangzeb captured the fort these tombs were used as quarters for his officers.

There are more than 30 tombs in the complex besides some open air tombs, raised over plinths of the noble men etc. Of these, mention may be made of the tombs of the seven kings and that of Hayat Bakshi Begum.

Tomb of Sultan Quli (Plate 9)

The tomb of Sultan Quli, the first king of Hyderabad, is situated a little towards north-west of Mohamad Quli's tomb erected during

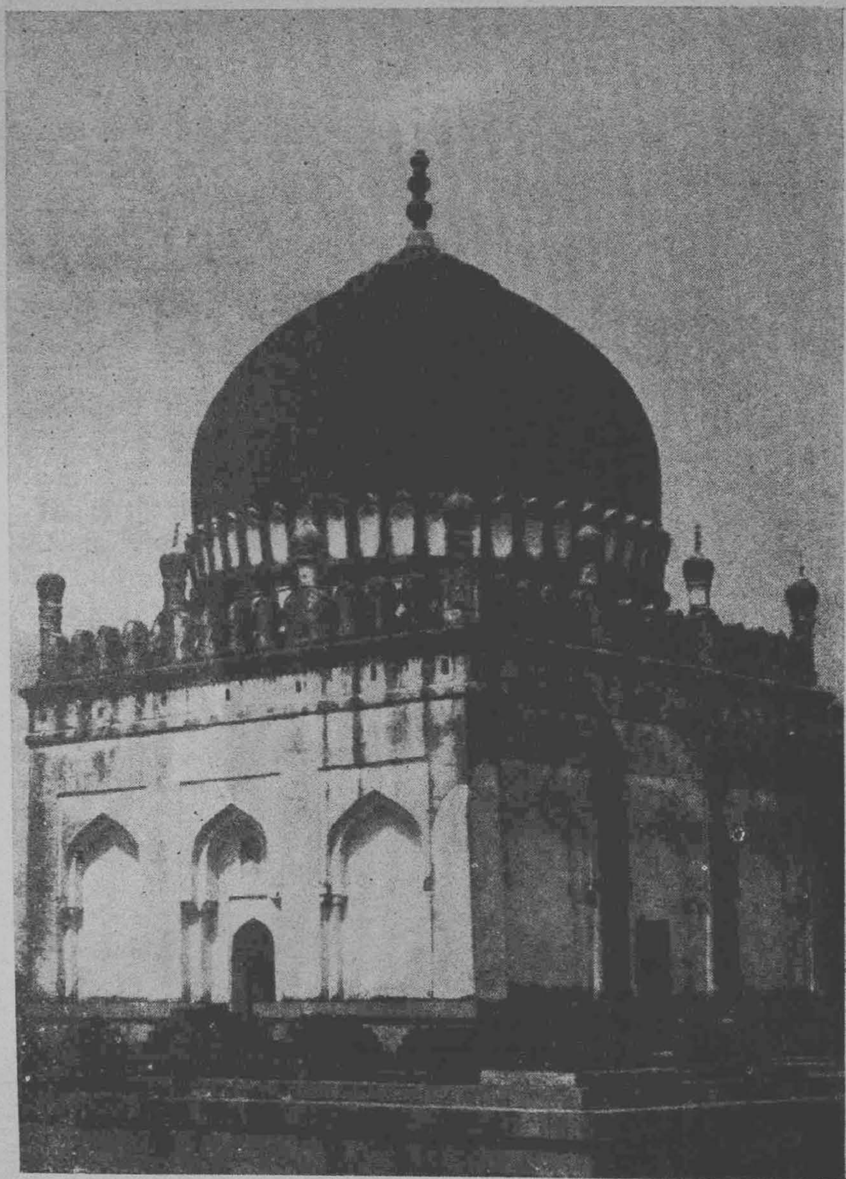


PLATE 9 : Tomb of Sultan Quli Qutb Shah.



PLATE 10 : Tomb of Jamsheed Qutb Shah.



PLATE 11 : Tomb of Ibrahim Quli Qutub Shah.

his own life time for his internment. It stands in contrast with the adjoining massive structures of his successors by its symmetrical proportions and simplicity of design. The tomb is 9.5 meters square built on a platform of 30.5 sq. meters. The interior is made into an octagonal hall. The outer elevation is quadrangular in plan with walls rising to 6 meters high and crowned by a dome which soars up another 6 meters. The four corners of the roof are pleasingly ornamented by four bouquets which is reminiscent of the style of Bahmani architecture particularly at Bidar. Sultan Quli died on 2nd September 1543 A.D.

Tomb of Jamsheed Quli Qutub Shah (Plate 10)

The tomb of Jamsheed, the second king, was erected hy himself at the south-western side of his father's tomb. This is one of the most beautiful structures though not massive as those of his successors but of delectable proportions. The tomb is octagonal in plan, constructed over a high square platform. For giving an impression of division into two stories an open balcony supported by brackets at the medial height and one more balcony at the top interposed by minarets are provided. Each facet of the octagon has a pointed arch set in a rectangular frame. The upper series of arches have small arch like openings. The building is crowned by a hemispherical dome set in a lotus petalled cup and at the top is a 4.5 meters high copper finial with a pointed tip. Jamsheed died on 22nd January 1550 A.D.

Tomb of Ibrahim Quli Qutub Shah (Plate 11)

The tomb of Ibrahim Quli Qutub Shah the fourth king, who died on 5th of June 1580, is a quadrangular building with two rows of five arches one over the other, pierced into the wall on each side in order to give a two storied effect to the building. Each face is topped by a balustrade interspersed with miniature arches at the four corners. This is one of the structures that show traces of enamel of various hues. Internally the plan of the tomb is 9.5 meters square at the base but by placing four arches at the corners, it has been turned into an octagon and a little higher up it become 16 sided by the contrivance of overlapping arches. The exterior face of the tomb was once beautifully decorated with encaustic tiles of different colours and even today these enamelled tiles on two upper arches towards right facing south are in a good state of preservation.

Tomb of Mohamad Quli Qutub Shah (Plate 12)

The structure of the tomb of Mohamad Quli Qutub Shah, the fifth king, represents the first attempt at the building of a tomb on a



PLATE 12 : Tomb of Mohamad Quli Qutub Shah.
(Founder of Hyderabad)

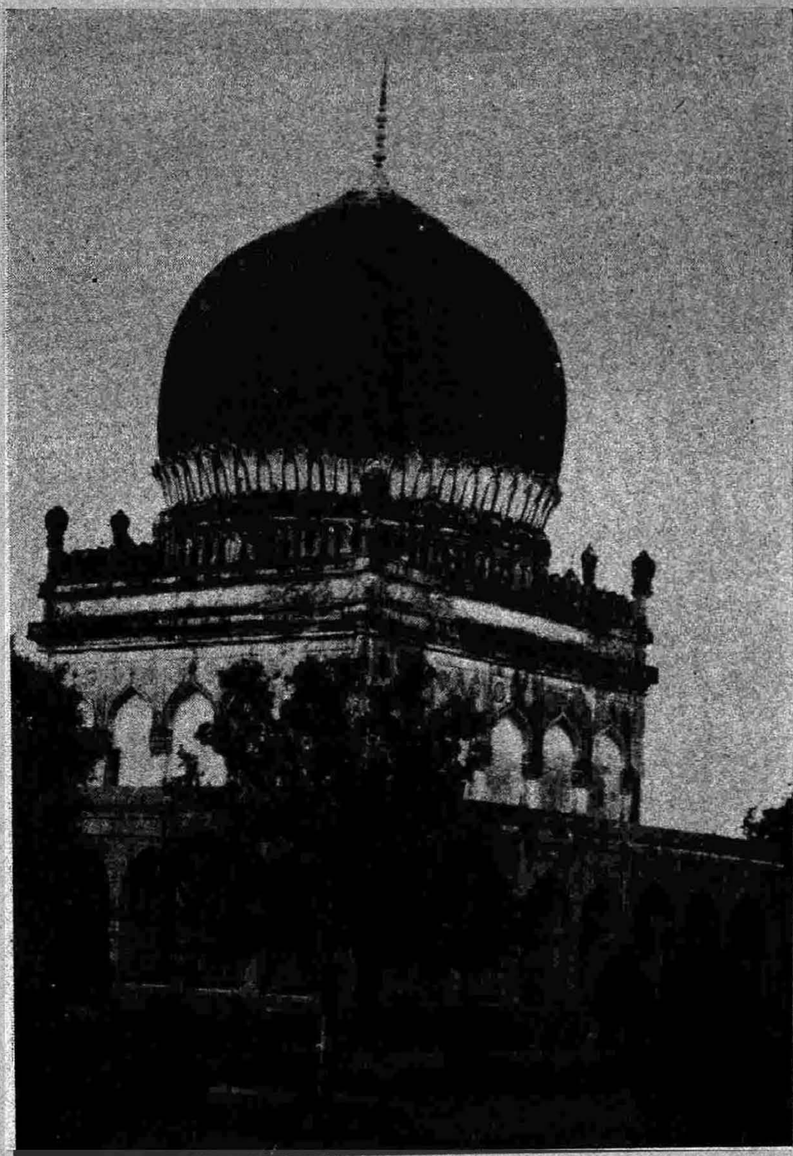


PLATE 13 : Tomb of Mohamad Qutub Shah.

massive scale. This magnificent tomb which is one of the largest and certainly the finest in the group, is 42.5 meters high. The dome is about 18.2 meters high. To make the monument imposing, the architect has judiciously planned it on a double terrace, rising to a height of 6 meters from the ground level. The lower one is 60.8 meters square supported by a facade of 28 open arches on each side and the upper terrace is 38.3 meters square. The plan of the earlier Qutub Shahi tombs had been square or octagonal, hall forming the base which was crowned by a dome. But this arrangement not being suitable for a large domical structure, this tomb was designed as a picturesque gallery with false openings with two central pillars supporting horizontal lintels on the four exterior sides of the hall in order to make the base symmetrical to its otherwise heavy dome. The roof is supported by octagonal pillars topped by lotus captials. In order to relieve monotony, rich ornamental parapets with minarets at the corners are added. The real grave where the king was buried is seen in the crypt in the midst of the lower plinth at the level of the land surface. It is covered by a plain tumulus of black stone while the shadow tomb is inside the pompous and majestic surroundings at the higher floor level. Sultan Mohamad Quli Qutub Shah died on 11th January 1612 A. D.

Tomb of Mohamad Qutub Shah (Plate 13)

Mohamad Qutub Shah, the son-in-law of Mohamad Quli and the 6th king in line, died on the 31st January 1626 A. D. Besides his, there are six other graves inside, three large and three small, of his sons and daughters. The tomb is a distinct improvement upon those of his predecessors both in plan and architectural detail. The architect has replaced the pillar and lintel openings by ogee arches and to make it pleasing the roof of the arched gallery was lowered than the roof of the prinicipal hall. The facade of this tomb had enamelled tiles, traces of which are extant. The peculiar charam of the tomb lies "In tone and air, in association, in delicacy and ingenuity of detail".

Tomb of Hayat Bakshi Begum (Plate 14)

The mausoleum of Hayat Bakshi Begum is situated a few yards towards right of the entrance to the tombs complex. Hayat Bakshi was the wife of Sultan Mohamad Qutub Shah the fifth king and mother of Sultan Abdullah, the sixth king whose tomb is outside the enclosure, towards fort. She is the daughter of Mohamad Quli Qutub Shah, the founder of Hyderabad. She died in the year 1617. Her mausoleum is a beautiful structure with a rectangular stone cistern in front, with a fountain. Towards the left of the steps of the tomb is a small mosque

PLATE 14 : Tomb of Hayat Bakshi Begum.

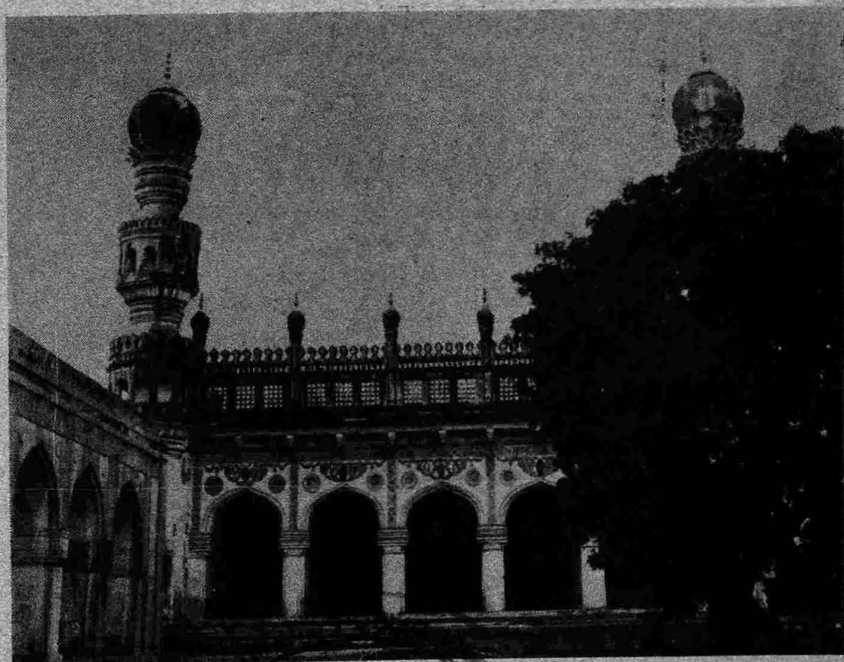


PLATE 15 : Masjid behind the tomb of Hayat Bakshi Begum.

PLATE 16 : Tomb of Abdullah Qutub Shah.

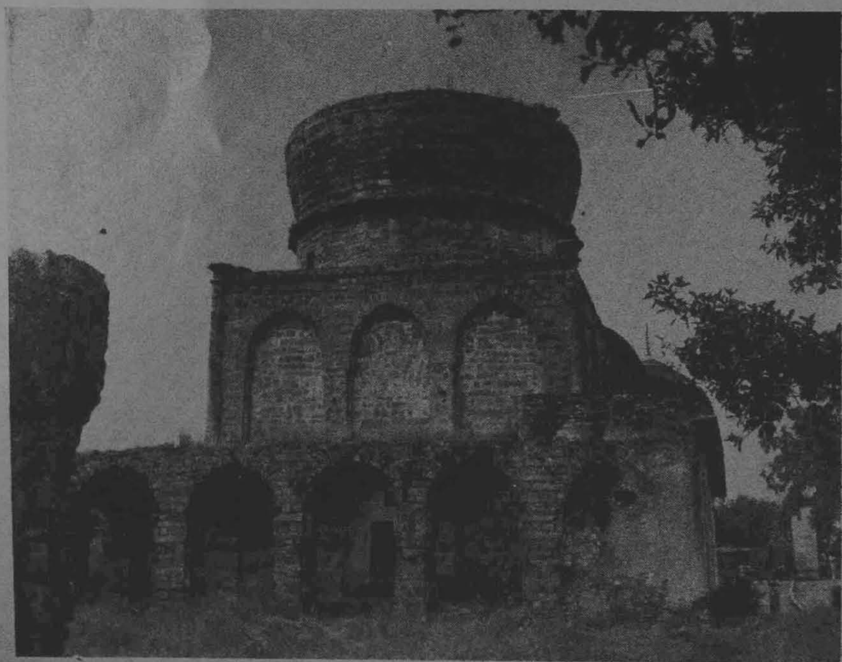


PLATE 17 : Incomplete Tomb of Abul Hasan Tana Shah.

built along with the tomb. It is said that Aurangzeb offered his prayers at the small mosque during his campaign against against Golconda. The tomb is approached by a flight of steps leading to an extensive platform about 1.8 meter above the ground level. It is provided with an arcade of seven pointed arches on each side enclosing corridors. The main building is a quadrangular hall with five false arches on the four sides crowned by a low parapet and provided with six miniature minarets. Above this rises a beautiful semi-circular dome set in a cup of lotus petals. The top of the dome is crowned by a copper finial pointing towards sky. The corridor is about 30 meters square, the shrine itself being about 19 meters square. The dome and the corridor are built of dressed granite cut in huge blocks, covered in some parts with plaster and stucco in ornate designs. The door-ways are also made of highly polished black basalt and are surmounted by architraves. The dome rises to a height of 15 meters including the height of the arcade and the tomb proper.

Attached to this tomb and towards north-west is a beautiful mosque (Plate 15) very richly ornamented with stucco work of a high order with entwining creepers and rosettes. Interestingly, a figure of small squirrel is depicted on the creeper. Representation of any sort of a living being is taboo in the Islamic architecture, but here is an exception, reminiscent of Persian influence.

The use of stucco as an architectural decoration in India may be traced from the Buddhist times. We find beautiful stucco figures from 3rd–4th centuries A. D. onwards. Stucco was basically used as a mode to cover the walls of palaces and temples, because the medium of construction – baked and unbaked brick or rubble in mortar, was not very impressive and also because the richness of surface decoration was deemed to create a very pleasing effect than barren walls. There is no doubt that the Qutub Shahi architecture was much influenced by the local Hindu artisans, though some motifs have been borrowed from elsewhere.

The massive structure covering the mortal remains of a lady is an evidence of the political role Hayat Baksh Begum had played during her life time. She was beloved of the people, who almost worshipped her. She was universally addressed as "Maa Saheba"

Tomb of Abdullah Qutub Shah (Plate 16)

The tomb of Abdullah Qutub Shah, the 7th king, embodies the artistic concepts of the monarch. No doubt in style the building is

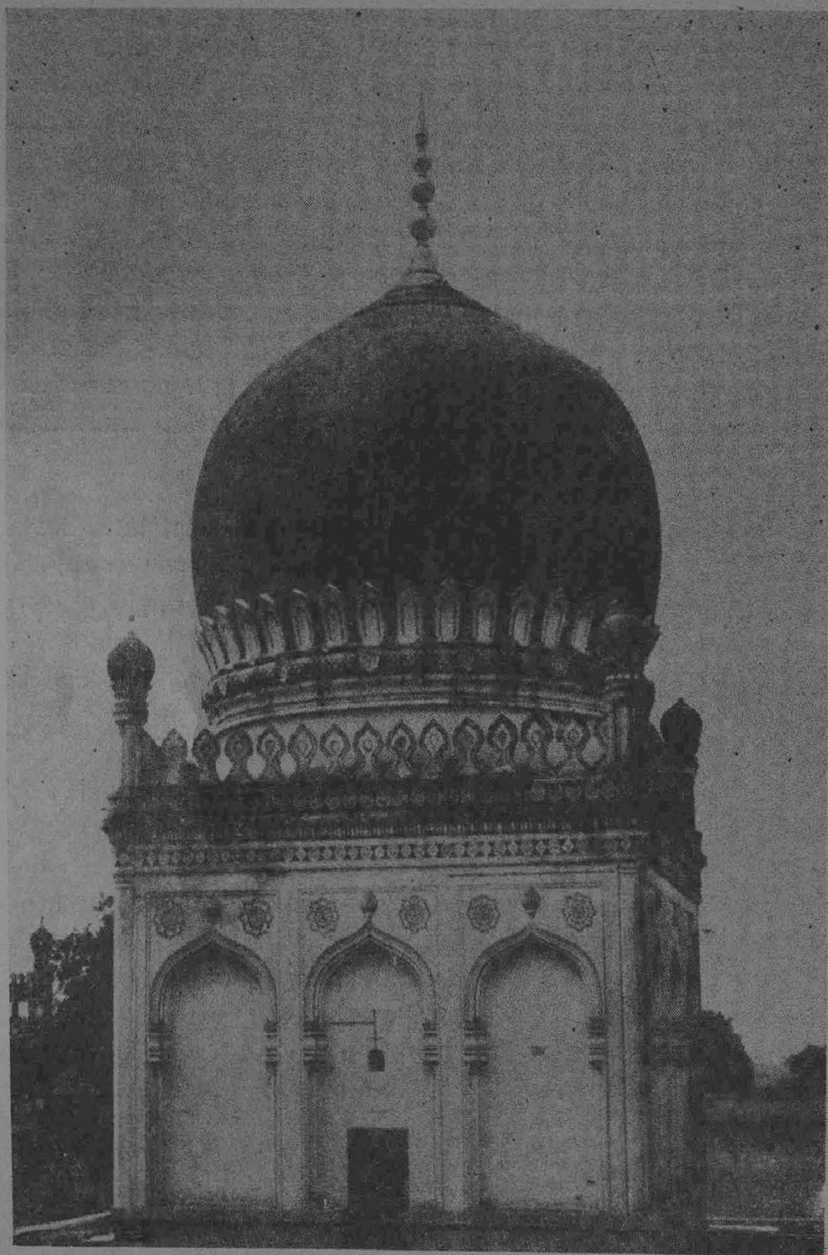


PLATE 18 : Tomb of Kulsoom Begum.

similar to those of his predecessors, yet in conception, it is far grander and in execution perfect. The tomb is built on a much larger scale than the tombs of his mother or father. It is of black granite with five decreasing plinths all inscribed with 'Ayats' of the Holy Quran. It is ordained that every pious Muslim should offer prayers to the God Almighty five times a day. These decreasing plinths of the tomb may have a bearing on the number of prayers and with the last prayer as symbolised by the finial at the top of the tomb for one to attain the abode of God.

The platform is 82 Meters square but the scheme of construction is similar to those of the other preceeding kings in the provision of arcades with seven pointed arches enclosing a running varandah. The quadrangular main hall was decorated with five false arches and crowned by balustrades interjected by finials. The dome rises over the quadrangular building out of an ornately decorated cup of lotus petals. A copper finial over the tapering dome pointing towards the sky indicates the oneness of God Almighty.

Unfinished tomb of Audul Hasan Tana Shah (Plate 17)

The unfinished building for the tomb of Abul Hasan Tana Shah, the 8th king, situated on the left of the main gateway is a melancholy torso of the unfortunate king the eighth and the last of the Qutub Shahi kings, who was taken as captive by Aurangzeb in 1687 and died at Daultabad. Abul Hasan was buried at Roza on the way from Daultabad to Aurangabad, in a modest tomb situated by the road side at Daultabad.

The tomb of Kulsoom Begum (Plate 18)

The other notable buildings inside the complex of tombs is that of Kulsum Begum situated towards the west of the tomb of Mohamad Quli Qutub Shah. There are two large graves inside without epitaphs. It is believed that one of the tombs is that of Bhagmati, the mistress of Mohamad Quli Qutub Shah on whose name the city of Hyderabad was founded.

Mortuary (Plate 19)

The mortuary is a rectangular hall provided with a central 12 facetted circular platform with 12 radiating spokes in the shape of a wheel symbolising time. The dead bodies of the kings and the nobles used to be brought to the mortuary for giving the last, ceremonial bath. The bodies were kept over the platform and then funeral ceremonies



PLATE 19 : Mortuary.

were performed before taking them to the tombs for internment. There is provision, in the mortuary, for supply of hot and cold water through the pipe lines and cisterns. Shah Rocco observed: "It is impossible not to feel the appeal of the associations that must have centred round this spot, the end of insurgent life, the legacy of faith and hope to those left behind, to pray with tenser voice for consolation from the sorrows of today and comfort for the uncertainities of tomorrow".

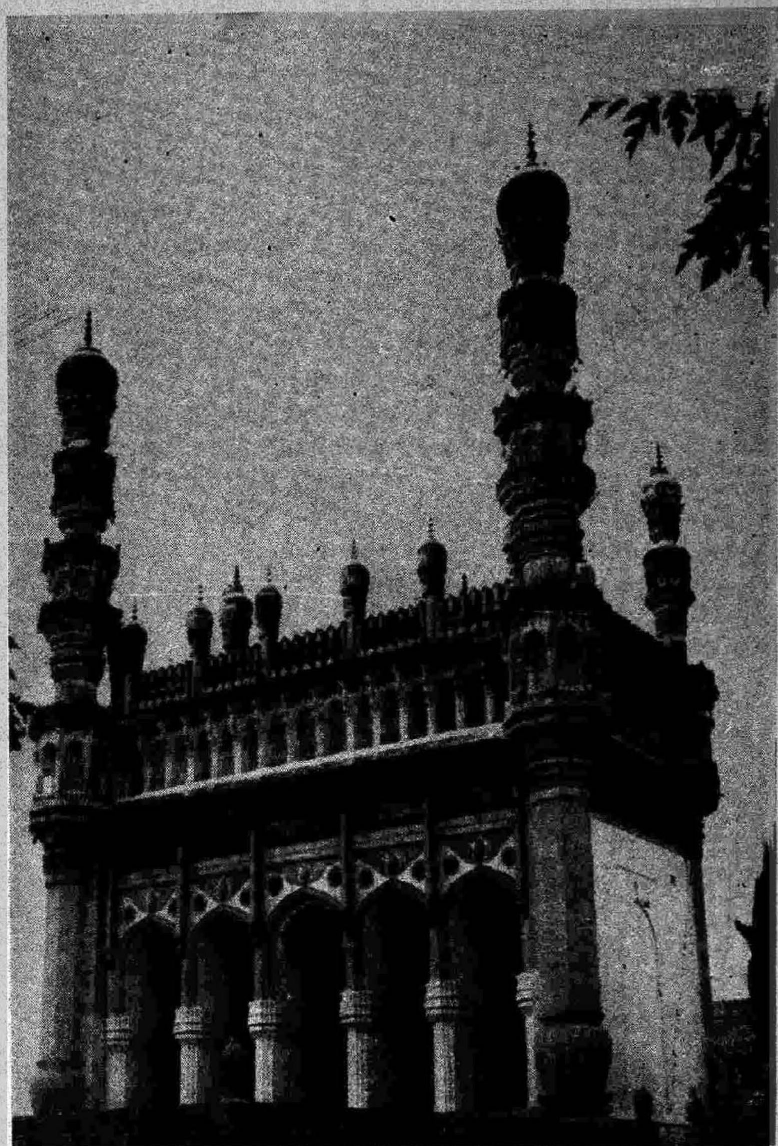


PLATE 20 : Toli Masjid

OTHER IMPORTANT MONUMENTS

Toli Masjid (Plate 20)

The suburb of Karwan which lies to the south-east of the fort was planned during the times of the Qutub Shahi kings. The kings with their entourage passed through this suburb while going to the city of Hyderabad from the Golconda fort. The Toli Masjid situated to the right of the main road is a magnificent monument of the Qutub Shahi period. This is probably one of the finest buildings representing the culmination of the Qutub Shahi architecture. It was built in the year 1671 A. D. in reign of the king Abdullah. The main building is divided into two Dalans or halls, a nave and one aisle, the outer one being provided with five arched openings and the inner one with only three. Two minarets each about 20 meters high flank the building on either side. The pillars at the corners consist of pot shaped bases which support octagonal shafts and lotus capitals, over which rise the minars with moulded shafts and diminutive balustrades topped by domes and finials. The parapets over the top of the building comprise of series of miniature arches closed with perforated screens of various designs. The pot bases of the pillars are reminiscent of the Buddhist and Hindu architecture. According to the inscription which is engraved on the prayer niche, this mosque was built by Moosa Khan in the reign of king Abdullah in the year 1671 A. D.

The Moosa Burj of the Golconda fort was also built by Moosa Khan who was the Chamberlain of the king Abdullah Qutub Shah. The author of the 'Gulzar-e-Asafia' records that when Moosa Khan was attending to the construction of Mecca Masjid, he was allowed a discount of one Damri (Dammidi in Telugu) per rupee out of the building expenditure. Moosa Khan utilised the amount thus collected for building the Toli Masjid, thus the author of above work spoke of it as Dumdi Masjid. Moosa Khan played an important role in the accession of Abul Hasan the last king, to the throne of Golconda.

Charminar (Plate 21)

The Charminar or the four minarets is the "Chef d' Oevre" of the Qutub Shahi period. It is a magnificent rectangular edifice built upon four grand arches facing north, south, east and west. The Charminar was built by Mohamad Quli Qutub Shah in 1591. Thevenot the French traveller who visited Hyderabad in 1667 says "That which is called four towers is a square building of which each face is 10 fathoms broad and about 7 high .... The whole building being adorned with roses and festoons prettily cut".

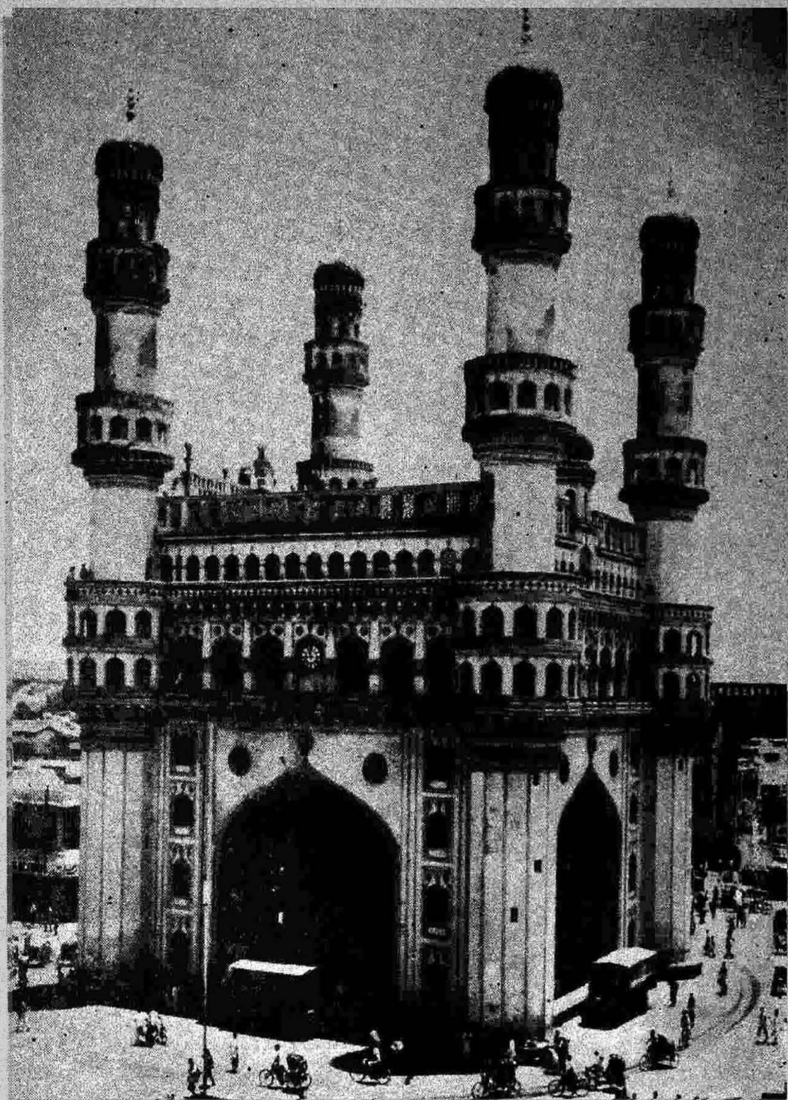


PLATE 21 : Charminar.

Sherwani observed that "It is certainly one of the grandest buildings in the whole country". The plan is square, each side measuring 20 meters while the four arches are 11 meters broad and 20 meters high above the plinth level. The minarets which are four storied rise to 20 meters, from the roof of the building and 24 meters from the plinth level. Dr. Yazdani observed 'In order to minimise the height to the observer, the architect has set up a double screen of arched openings at the top of the roof between the minarets'. The various designs of these openings are extremely delicate. The western section of the roof is taken up by a mosque which is perhaps one of the most beautiful of the Qutub Shahi period. There are 45 prayer spaces within the covered liwan of the mosque with a large open space in front of the mosque to be utilised for prayers on Fridays. To the east of this open space, is a beautiful varandah of fine proportions with a large open arch in the middle flanked by a number of small arches on either side.

There are many theories regarding the purpose of Charminar. Sherwani believes that it was primarily the centre of a planned city, and as the architect wanted to utilise it to its best advantage - the upper storey was turned into a school for both Muslims and non-Muslims with its covered corridor running around. Thevenot says that all the galleries of Charminar seem to make the water mount up so that it can be conveyed to the king's palaces to reach their higher apartments. It appears that water was brought from the Jalpally reservoir. There is another view that it served as a gateway in front of the beautiful piazza on which the lofty portals of the royal palaces open. Summing up the above views, it may be deduced that, the building being a secular one was intended mainly to embellish the city and also to provide water to the royal palaces nearby. No doubt it was utilised for religious purpose and also for imparting education. As such, it may called a multipurpose building.

The Badshahi Ashoor Khana (Plate 22)

About 100 meters from the Nayapul and opposite the Madina Building is the Badshahi Ashoor Khana erected by Mohamad Quli Qutub Shah in 1594 A. D. The name of the ruling king is inscribed on the western wall and also on the central niche. The interior of the building is decorated with exquisite enamel tilework during the reign of Sultan Mohamad in 1611 A. D. Besides the above two kings the name and royal titles of Sultan Abdulla Qutub Shah have also been inscribed in very fine ornamental Tughra style - an evidence to show that he was responsible for the renovation of this building. Abdullah also intro-



PLATE 22 : Badshahi Ashur Khana.

duced the use of Standards (Alams) in the month of Moharram. Even after three centuries of its hallowed existence "the freshness and resplendence of the enamel tiles have maintained their brilliant lusture and the excellence and beauty of their colours, as also the arrangement and fitting together of joints are highly commendable" (plate 23).

Enamel decoration, of buildings is comparatively less during the Qutub Shahi period. Some Bahmani kings have profusely decorated their buildings at Bidar with mosaic tiles. The existing Qutub Shahi buildings decorated with enamel tiles are the mosque at Shaikpet which is stylistically not far off from the Bahmani structures, the tomb of Ibrahim Qutub Shah, the tomb of Mohamad Qutub Shah and Badshahi Ashoor Khana.

The Mecca Masjid (Plate 24)

The Mecca Masjid situated about 100 yards towards south-west of Charminar is the bigest mosque in Hyderabad. It is so called after the mosque at Mecca on which it is designed. The length of the hall is 67 meters and 54 meters broad and 23 meters high. The roof is supported by 15 arches, five on three sides while the western side is blocked by a high wall to provide the Mehrab. At each end are two massive octagonal columns, each surmounted by an arched gallery

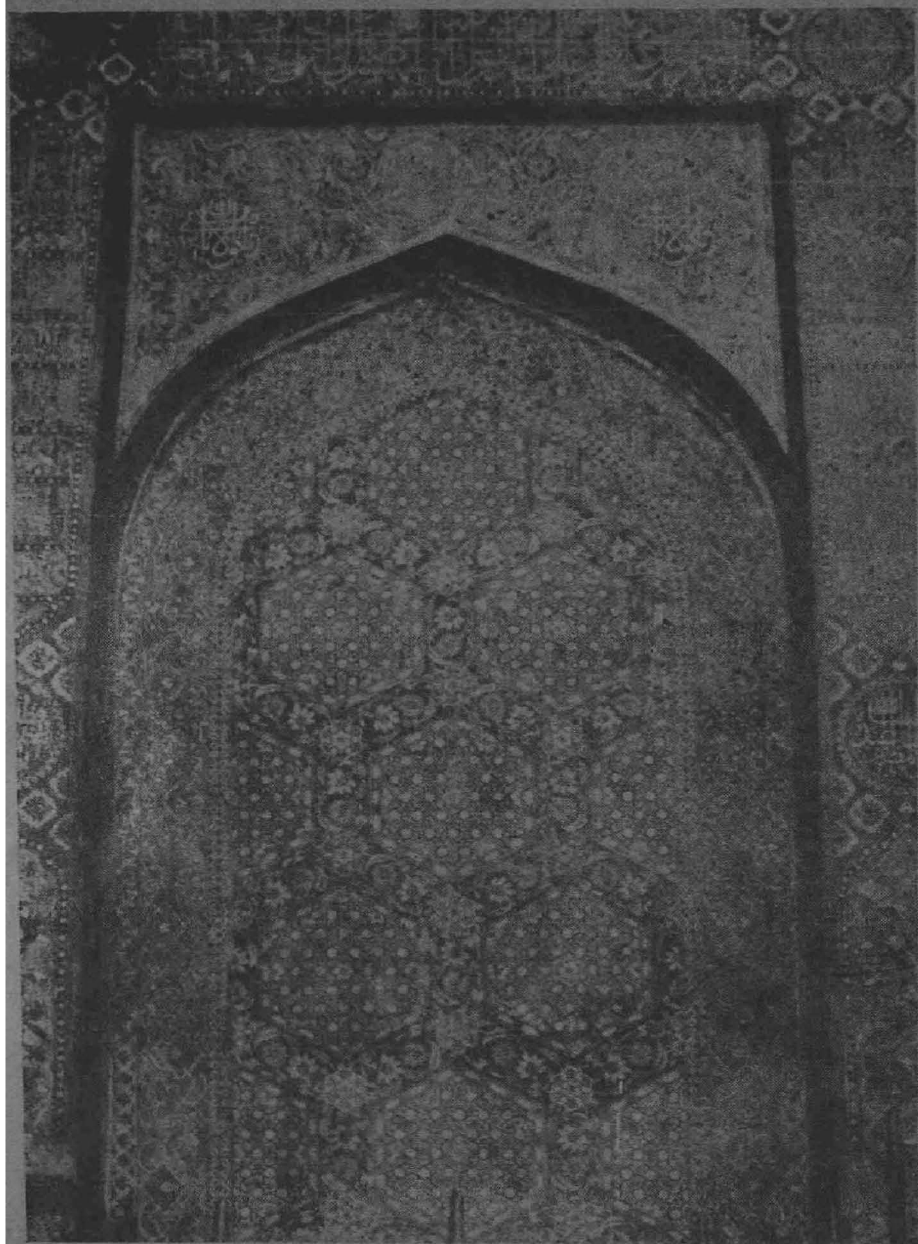


PLATE 23 : Tile decoration of Badshahi Ashur Khana.

This book

has been brought out

on the special occasion of

the visit of

Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II

to Qutub Shahi Gardens

on 19-11-1983

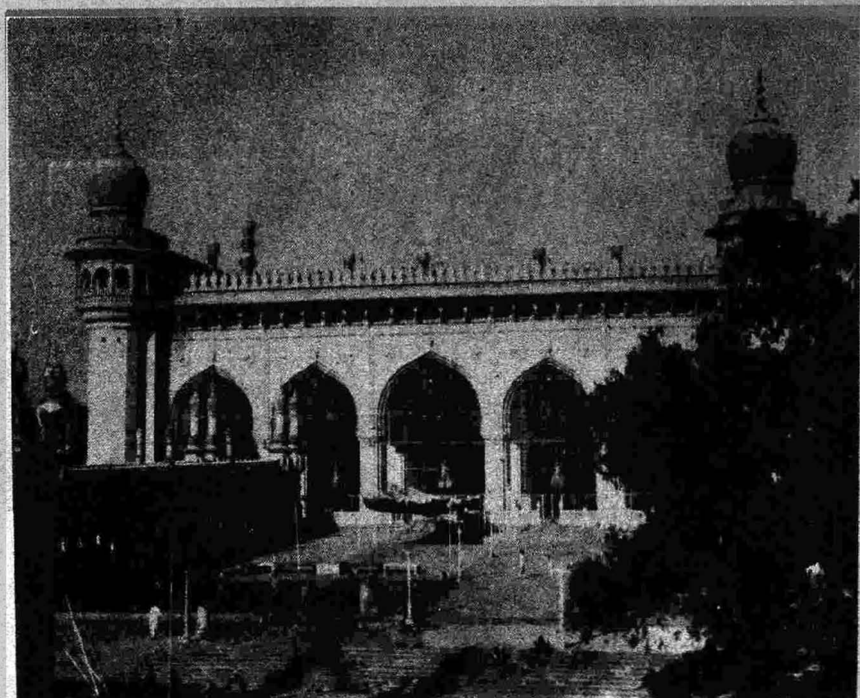


PLATE 24 : Mecca Masjid.

which in turn is crowned by a dome. The columns are made out of a single piece of granite. The building, probably one of the largest mosques in India, is capable of accomodating ten thousand people at a time.

The erection of this grand mosque was initiated by Sultan Mohamad Qutub Shah under the supervision of Daroga Mir Faizullah Baig and Choudhary Rangiah alias Hunarmand Khan with the help of nearly 8000 masons and labourers. The construction work was continued during the reigns of Abdullah Qutub Shah and Abul Hasan Tana Shah at a cost of 8 lakhs of rupees and it was completed finally, after 77 years, by the Mughal emperor Aurangzeb, in 1694 A. D.

When the foundation of this mosque was being laid it is related that Sultan Mohamad Qutub Shah after inviting the learned and pious men of the city, asked them to have the foundation stone laid by one who had never missed his prayers. But no one came forward, finally he himself laid the foundation stone by saying that he had never missed even his mid-night prayers eversince his 12th year. According to Tavernier the stone for the prayer niche was hewn out of the quarry by several hundreds of labourers in the course of five years and seven

hundred pairs of bullocks carried it to the mosque. One of the rooms in the court yard contains the hair of the Prophet and other sacred relics. Sultan Mohamad named this mosque "Baitul Atiq" which gives date of its erection according to Hijri year as 1023 which corresponds to 1614 A. D.

The following verse was composed by a poet and presented to the king in commemoration of its erection. The verse is translated by Asghar Bilgrami thus, "If the pilgrimage of noble Kaaba is not attainable to thee, come and pray in the Kaaba of the Deccan". It is believed that Mohamad Qutub Shah had some bricks made out of the earth of Mecca which were inserted over the central arch. Accordingly the name of Mecca Masjid became popular.

After its completion by the Moghul emperor Aurangzeb, somebody suggested for further decoration of the mosque. He replied in his characteristic style that "Transactions of the world have never been completed by any one, as such impose upon yourself as little as possible".

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